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REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON BLACKSTRAP MOLASSES FOR FARM LIVESTOCK

Herewith is submitted a very brief summary of the available literature on the feeding of blackstrap molasses to livestock. This was drafted by Mr. R. B. Cathcart of the University of Nebraska from thirty-four sources which he found available in the Nebraska College of Agriculture Library.

The statements as prepared by Mr. Cathcart have not been modified other than that the supplementary note in brackets follows point No. 4. This was deemed advisable in order to remind the reader of the important part which temperature plays in the use of molasses in a mixture.

1. Cane molasses is a carbonaceous feed similar in composition to the common feed grains. It is very palatable. When fed to livestock it replaces in whole or in part corn, oats, barley, and wheat.
2. Cane molasses is only mildly laxative.
3. The feeding of molasses usually increases feed consumption, especially roughages. This sometimes leads to an increase in the rate and efficiency of gains. Animals usually drink more water when fed molasses.
4. Molasses should be diluted with from one to two parts of water, and poured on the grain or roughage. It is especially valuable when fed on cut roughage. Molasses may be self-fed from a barrel in a tight grain bunk. It may be fed as a slop to hogs. (Dilution should be done at time of

feeding in warm weather, as fermentation starts more rapidly with addition of water. In the South, dilution is seldom necessary or advisable.)

5. In addition to being hard to pour in cold weather, molasses has several disadvantages in warm weather. Animals tend to smear themselves with the sticky liquid around their mouths and on their forequarters. Flies and other insects are a nuisance, because they are attracted to the sticky hair and to the feed bunks.
6. Cane molasses is especially good as a "conditioner" for horses. It may be fed as high as 9 or 10 pounds per day with safety. The ration may be changed suddenly from dry grain to molasses, but the molasses should be removed gradually. When at hard work in summer, horses should not receive over about 6 pounds.
7. Up until about 3 pounds, molasses is as valuable as corn in the steer fattening ration. It can be safely used up to one-half of the grain ration, although corn is worth a little more on a pound for pound basis. Molasses is of more value for aged cattle than for calves. Calves tend to grow more on molasses than on corn.
8. Dairy cows can receive molasses up to 4 or 5 pounds.
9. Molasses should not be substituted for more than one-fourth of the corn for fattening hogs. For brood sows it may be substituted for one-half the corn.
10. Lambs may be fed up to 0.5 pound per head daily. Molasses is not very satisfactory, because the fleeces become badly matted.
11. Poultry rations may be composed of as much as 10 per cent molasses.

COMMENTS

It is very interesting to note that in most respects molasses has proven to be a very useful feed. This is of special importance in the drought area now for the following reasons:

1. Molasses is available at a price considerably below that prevailing for feed grains.
2. There is considerable low grade roughage with which molasses can be mixed to very good advantage.
3. At this time, farm horses are very thin and should be conditioned for spring work. Molasses can well serve a place in their rations, based on Mr. Cathcart's summary.
4. Molasses can serve as part of the ration for fattening cattle and thus help solve the problems of the feeder who is having difficulty procuring sufficient corn to carry on his operations.